

Sturdy Survivors



Only the toughest plants can endure the harsh environment along this coast. Salt spray and winds suck moisture from vegetation as effectively as a desert breeze. Sitka spruce, red alder, and other salt-tolerant trees survive on the bluffs because they can withstand the drying effect of ocean sprays. These tenacious survivors absorb the briny winds and provide a protective “buffer” for salt-sensitive redwoods in inland valleys.



Stone crop



Black huckleberry



Cow parsnip

Ferocious Pacific storms cause “wind pruning” or “salt shear” as the wind-borne salt dries and kills the new growth on a plant’s seaward side, while the protected side grows more normally.

Hardy plants such as stone crop, huckleberry, and cow parsnip grow here because their fleshy, waxy leaves seal in moisture against the wind.